



State Senator Alan Lowenthal 27th District

E-Newsletter

Summer 2006



Serving the communities of Artesia, Avalon, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Florence–Graham, Hawaiian Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Lynwood, Paramount, Signal Hill, South Gate, and Willowbrook.

Senator Lowenthal's Sacramento Update

Dear Community Members:

I am proud to announce that the State Legislature has passed a bipartisan infrastructure bond package (AB 127, AB 1400, SB 1266, and SB 1689) that will benefit not only the local community, but California as a whole. I voted for AB 127, AB 1400, SB 1266, and SB 1689, because we are long overdue on improving our infrastructure to help cope with growing traffic congestion on our highways, deteriorating roads, over-crowded schools, and air pollution. Democrats and Republicans have worked together in the legislature to produce a bond that serves California's needs.

This bond package, the largest in the states history, will invest \$37 billion in California's infrastructure. The package includes \$19.9 billion for transportation, \$2.8 billion for housing, \$10.4 billion for education, and \$4 billion for protecting and securing our levees. This bond will specifically benefit our area by improving mass transit, extending the carpool lanes along the 405 freeway, improving security at the ports, funding the construction of affordable housing, and retrofitting school buses to reduce smog. The measure on education will specifically allocate money for school construction, rehabilitation and modernization, and it is expected to relieve some of the overcrowding in our schools.

The bond has benefits for both cities and counties. The County of Los Angeles will receive an estimated \$194.4 million for street and road repairs. The cities in the 27th Senate District will receive an estimated \$35.2 million, which will in turn be divided among cities according to their populations. In addition to what counties and cities will receive individually, the 27th district is expected to receive additional benefits estimated at \$2 billion for goods movement, and \$1 billion for air quality. I am hopeful that this bond will relieve our communities of the wear and tear that they have endured.

Sincerely,

Alan S. Lowenthal
State Senator, 27th District

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27th Senate District “Women Who Make a Difference” Luncheon



PARAMOUNT - In celebration of women and their many contributions to our society, Senator Lowenthal honored 19 local women at a special luncheon on April 21st to acknowledge their dedicated service to the community. The event was held at his Paramount district office, in the Clear Water building. Each woman was individually recognized by Senator Lowenthal, pinned with a corsage, and presented with a Senate resolution. “It is women like you who have made tremendous accomplishments in our communities throughout history. You are proof that one woman can make such an enormous difference in our neighborhoods,” said Senator Lowenthal.

The diverse group of women were nominated by several different organizations, and contribute to many cities in the 27th district. These spectacular women have made a difference through their involvement with youth, environment, education, women, and more. Senator Lowenthal acknowledged that together these women affect various aspects of our society, and have courageously stood up and taken the lead in attending to our communities needs. In closing he said, “I thank you for your great sense of obligation and for the tremendous personal commitment that you have graciously donated, which often comes with incredible personal sacrifices.”

2006 Honorees

Ms. Lois Buchanan
Ms. Denise Damrow
Ms. Anita Dempsey
Sr. Teresa Doherty
Dr. Wendy Doty
Ms. Diane DuBois
Ms. Shea Hamilton
Ms. Ethel Hillyard
Ms. Ernestina Hurtado
Ms. Mary Lou Landes
Mrs. Cleo Latimer
Mrs. Kathleen Lin
Dr. Jana Martin
Ms. Nicole McGahey
Ms. Patricia Nunez
Ms. Janet Sampson
Ms. Stephanie Smiley
Ms. Kimberly Visser
Ms. Lynn Wirt

Nominated by

Downey Coordinating Council
Signal Hill Chamber of Commerce
City of Long Beach
Soroptimist International of Paramount
City of Downey, Gangs Out of Downey, Downey Unified
City of Lakewood, Soroptimist Intl of Lakewood/Long Beach
Soroptimist Intl Camino Real Region, Willowbrook Community
City of Paramount
City of Artesia
City of Hawaiian Gardens
City of Downey
ABCUSD, and Cerritos College
Soroptimist International of Bellflower
City of Bellflower
City of South Gate
City of Lynwood
County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Florence-Graham
ABCUSD, Artesia High School
ABCUSD, Gahr High School, City of Cerritos

Senator Lowenthal tours “Clothes the Deal”



Senator Lowenthal encourages students to continue on their path to success



An instructor teaches students about the importance of goal setting.

DOWNEY - “Clothes the Deal” is a non-profit organization that has been helping low income job seekers go from welfare to stable employment for over a decade. The curriculum consists of a step-by-step program that teaches women and men how to interview and properly fill out employment applications. In addition to walking people through the job seeking process, “Clothes the Deal” takes it one step further by educating the participants on what it takes to actually keep the job. This includes being professional, responsible, punctual, and having good self-esteem. Students are taught about goal-setting, saving money, and maintaining good overall health. The final step in the program is providing clothing for the job seekers so that they can “clothes the deal.” Clothes the Deal accepts public donations of professional work attire that is in good condition, and has preferably been dry cleaned.

During the Senator’s tour, he had a brief introduction with the students, where he was able to address them. He said, “I think it’s great that you are all here willing to make a positive difference in your lives. You’re on a path, and you don’t necessarily know where it will take you, but by being here you are taking a step in the right direction, and I commend you for it.” Senator Lowenthal was very impressed with this program, and the great efforts that Clothes the Deal has made to create a positive difference in people’s lives and our community.

District 27 Celebrates: Jeffrey Garcia

DOWNEY - Jeffrey Garcia, a Downey resident and a Senior at Don Bosco Technical Institute will be graduating this Spring, and attending Stanford University in the Fall. He is currently taking several Advanced Placement (AP) courses including, American politics, macro-economics, and physics. In addition to his academic excellence, he is a member of the National Honors Society, American Society of Materials (Science/Engineering), Key Club, Guitar Club, and he plays tennis all while maintaining an overall GPA of 4.2. He will receive a \$3,000 educational grant in engineering and mathematics by the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, (HHF). During a reception held for him and other scholarship recipients, he was presented with a gold medallion by the HHF, and later presented with a certificate of recognition from Senator Lowenthal. Upon receiving his medallion, his parents and brother for their unconditional support and said, “...And to all of you out there who are motivators, keep it up...it works.”



Jeffrey (wearing gold medallion), pictured with his proud parents and older brother.

Senator Lowenthal Speaks at Environmental Conference



Senator Lowenthal gives opening remarks along with Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, (left) and a MAERSK Executive (right).

PORT OF LOS ANGELES - During an environmental press conference, held in Long Beach, MAERSK, a container and vessel carrier of goods, announced that as of March 2006 it has begun using a low-sulfur fuel (0.2%) in all their ships within 24 miles of the California Coast, as well as while docked. The fuel will be used in the main engines and auxiliary engines. This change will have the following environmental impact:

- Reduction of 400 tons of pollutants each year
- 73% reduction in Particulate Matter (PM)
- 92% reduction in Sulfur Oxide (SOx)
- 10% reduction in Nitrogen Oxide (NOx)



At the conference, Senator Lowenthal remarked that it was a great thing what MAERSK was announcing, and that he is glad to see a company of that size take a big step in the right direction for the sake of the environment and the people of this community. MAERSK currently has more than 500 container vessels, 1,400,000 containers, as well as their own trucks and trains. During the event, Senator Lowenthal said, "Our region faces many challenges with the pollution generated by our goods movement industry. It will take the efforts of our cities, local communities, the shippers, and our ports to improve our air." He then added, "Reducing air pollution in our region is a challenge, however with the leadership of company's such as MAERSK we can improve our air quality, and grow our economic engine that the ports provide." Senator Lowenthal applauded MAERSK for its initiative, and commended its efforts to improve our air. He also encouraged future progress. Present at the event was Mayor of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa, Barry Sedleck, of the California Business Transportation and Housing Agency representing the Governor, and Catherine Witherspoon, of the State Air Resources Board.

Reducing Carbon Dioxide:

10 Small Things You Can Do to Make Big Change

1. Change a Light Bulb

Replace one regular light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb

- Save 150 pounds of carbon dioxide per year

2. Drive less

Walk, bike, carpool or take mass transit more often.

- You will save on pound of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive.

3. Recycle more

Plastics, newspapers, etc.

- You can save 2,400 pounds of carbon dioxide per year by recycling just half of your household waste.

4. Check your tires

Keeping your tires inflated properly can improve gas mileage by more than 3%.

- Every gallon of gasoline saved keeps 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

5. Use less hot water

It takes a lot of energy to heat water: Use less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead.

- (350 pounds of CO₂ saved per year) and washing your clothes in cold or warm water (500 pounds saved per year).

6. Avoid products with a lot of packaging

You can save 1,200 pounds of carbon dioxide if you cut down your garbage by 10%

7. Adjust your thermostat

Moving your thermostat just 2 degrees down in winter and up 2 degrees in summer.

- You can save about 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year with this simple adjustment.

8. Plant a tree

A single tree will absorb on ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.

9. Turn off electronic devices

Simply turning off your television, DVD player, stereo, and computer when you're not using them will save you thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

10. Write your elected officials

Letting your elected officials know how you feel is one of the best ways to ensure that your voice is heard and your opinions are counted.

- You can visit www.lavote.net to find out your local, state, and federal representatives.

Senator Lowenthal hosts Senior Scam Stopper Seminar



CERRITOS - Senator Alan Lowenthal hosted a Senior Scam Stopper Seminar at the Cerritos Senior Center in an effort to help seniors avoid being victims of scams and identity theft. A panel of speakers was brought in from various state agencies including the Contractors State License Board, the Department of Consumer Affairs, the Federal Trade Commission, the Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Insurance, and the Department of Corporations. Each representative shared insightful tips and information on how to avoid being a victim, and what measures should be taken if something should occur.

Senator Lowenthal opened the seminar by explaining that as a senior himself, he understands that protecting seniors from scams of all kinds is imperative. "Seniors are all too often targeted for a multitude of different scams including: home improvement and repairs, patient's rights, identity theft, and insurance scams," he said. He also pointed out two important bills that he would like seniors in particular to keep an eye on. The first is AB 1363 (Jones), which establishes the Omnibus Conservatorship and Guardianship Reform Act of 2006. The Ombudsman would be charged with investigating and resolving complaints made by or on behalf of conservatees. This bill is sponsored by California Alliance for Retired Americans and the Older Women's League. The second bill is SB 192 (Scott), which seeks to protect seniors from investing in annuities that may be unsuitable for them because of a need to keep their cash in relatively safe and accessible investments, and to require insurers and agents to evaluate the suitability of senior investors prior to permitting these investments. Senator Lowenthal indicated that he will continue to support both bills.

Summer Energy Saving Tips

- Set your thermostat at 78 degrees or higher when at home and 85 degrees or off when home is unoccupied.
- Use exterior shading devices or deciduous trees and plants to shade your home and windows from the sun.
- Turn off furnace pilot light during the non-heat season. Call your gas company to re-light the pilot safely.
- Provide shading for your outside air conditioning unit and save up to 10% on your cooling costs.
- Close drapes or shades on sunny days to keep out the sun's heat. Open windows at night to cool your home.
- Replace your air conditioning filters once a month. Save up to 5% in cooling costs.

Senator Lowenthal Q & A

Topic: Redistricting

Status of Redistricting Bill SCA 3:

- The bill is active, goes up before the full Senate this week

Q. What changes will your bill make to the existing redistricting format?

A. This bill will completely change redistricting. The lines are currently drawn by the legislature. SCA 3 will remove this and replace it with an independent commission of citizens that are not accountable to the legislature but to the law as it is laid out in the bill.

Q. Do you think your bill makes for more competitive districts?

A. I think there will be more competitive districts. They will be fairly drawn and there will be an absence of gerrymandering, where districts are drawn to protect incumbents.

Q. Have you encountered much opposition?

A. Yes. While there are many in the legislature who support an independent commission, there are also a sizable number of legislators who want to draw the boundaries as they see fit.

Q. Will the bill change the makeup of your district?

A. I don't know. That's really up to the independent commission. It's impossible to say if there will be significant change or not.

Meet My New Staff Member

Sam Hall
Long Beach District Office



Sam Hall joined the Lowenthal team as a District Representative in May 2006. Sam provides support services to the cities of Avalon, Long Beach, and Signal Hill. In addition, he covers environmental and natural resource issues, and outreach to various constituency groups.

Sam is a Long Beach resident and has been active in our community for several years. A firm believer in the benefits of volunteering, Sam serves as a board member of a local nonprofit organization and has been a youth mentor, a sustainability instructor, and served as an intern in our office prior to becoming a district representative. Sam's previous career in business provides additional strength to his understanding of our communities' needs. "I enjoyed working in the private sector," says Sam, "however, I knew that a career in public service would be even more fulfilling."

Sam is greatly looking forward to strengthening the partnerships that he has developed thus far with the community and is happy to serve the constituents of the 27th District.

My Constituent Services

Constituent Services

Staff assistance from my district office is available for you if you have concerns or problems with the following:

- Medi-Cal
- Auto Insurance
- Consumer Complaints
- Unemployment Insurance
- Child Support and Child Care
- Disability Insurance
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- Workers' Compensation
- Franchise Tax Board
- Government Forms and Applications
- Complaints about State Departments
- Small Business Assistance

Brochures/Pamphlets

Various brochures and pamphlets on the following issues and topics are available from my office:

- At Your Service (Guide to Constituent Services)
- A Citizen's Guide To Lobbying
- Child Abuse
- Do I Need A Will?
- Elder Abuse
- Gangs: Is Your Community Prepared?
- Get Grants
- Get Off My Back (telemarketers)
- Identity Theft
- Just Be Safe (coloring book)
- Kids and the Law
- Seniors and the Law
- The Constitution of California
- Under 18? You Do the Crime, You Do the Time
- What Should I Do if I Have an Auto Accident?
- What Should I Know about Hate Crimes?
- What Should I Know Before I Rent?
- What Should I Know Before I Sign?
- When You Become 18

If you would like a copy of any of these publications, please feel free to contact my office at (562) 495-4766 or Senator.Lowenthal@sen.ca.gov. These are also available on my website: www.sen.ca.gov/lowenthal. (Most available in Spanish)

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